



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE February 26, 2007

Richard Edmonds, Chief, Public Health Initiatives Branch 509-7655

House Bill 5751 – An Act Establishing a Pilot Project for Family Nurse Practitioners

The Department of Public Health supports House Bill 5751.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) appreciates this opportunity to share with the public health committee the prevailing need for qualified health care professionals to address the shortage of providers that serve underinsured and uninsured residents. The purpose of the bill is to prepare family nurse practitioners for practice in safety net settings such as federally qualified health centers.

In CT there are 10 Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC's) that provide primary and preventive health care services regardless of one's ability to pay. They are a critical safety net provider and during SFY 2004, served over 200,000 clients annually. Large proportions of clients served by CHCs are underinsured or uninsured and heavily rely on FQHC's for ongoing health care.

Attracting qualified health care professionals to work in FQHC's has been an ongoing challenge and the DPH's State Loan Repayment has been an asset in filling this gap. DPH also works with the National Health Services Corp to attract health care professionals to FQHC's.

Most FQHC's employ many health care disciplines, including Nurse Practitioners. Having the opportunity to provide a year of training for Family Nurse Practitioners (FNP'S) at FQHC's would equip FNP's with the experience and training needed to provide quality health care upon graduation. This one year pilot project would open a pipeline for increasing the capacity of FNP's who would be equipped upon graduation, to work at CT's FQHC's.

Thank you again for your consideration of the Department's view on House Bill 5751.

Phone:



Telephone Device for the Deaf: (860) 509-7191

410 Capitol Avenue - MS # _____

P.O. Box 340308 Hartford, CT 06134

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